MARVEL

#7

ULTIMATES²

EWING
KOCH
BROWN

The ultimate team has come together to solve the ultimate problems. Blue Marvel. Spectrum. Black Panther. Captain Marvel. America Chavez. They are...

THE ULTIMATES²

I AM THE *NEVER QUEEN.* I AM WHAT *MIGHT BE,* FOREVER OUTSIDE WHAT *IS.* FROM HERE, I SEE *ALL.*

FIRST THERE WERE THE *ULTIMATES*--FORMED BY CAROL DANVERS TO SOLVE COSMIC PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY *BECAME* PROBLEMS.

THEY SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF *GALACTUS,* THE WORLD-EATER, BY EVOLVING HIM INTO HIS *TRUE ROLE* AS *LIFEBRINGER.*

BUT ON A LATER MISSION, GALACTUS--AND THE ULTIMATES--DISCOVERED THAT *ETERNITY,* HE WHO EMBODIES THE *MULTIVERSE,* WAS IN *CHAINS.*

RECENTLY, THEY DISCOVERED THE *NAME* OF ETERNITY'S *COSMIC JAILER*--THE *FIRST FIRMAMENT,* FIRST ITERATION OF *ALL REALITY.*

THE FIRST FIRMAMENT INFECTED ETERNITY, CORRUPTING TWO OF THE COSMIC ASPECTS--*LORD CHAOS* AND *MASTER ORDER*--

--AND INFLUENCING THEM TO MURDER THE *LIVING TRIBUNAL,* AVATAR OF *LAW AND JUSTICE,* THEN MERGE TOGETHER AND TAKE HIS PLACE AS THE CREATURE *LOGOS.*

LOGOS *EXECUTED* THE GODLIKE *CELESTIALS*--THEN ATTEMPTED TO CORRUPT *GALACTUS.* THOUGH HE *RECOVERED*--AT THE COST OF HIS HERALD *ANTI-MAN*--HE REMAINS *WEAKENED.*

MEANWHILE, THE ULTIMATES HAVE THEIR *OWN* PROBLEMS.

HYDRA--AND THEIR *SUPREME LEADER,* A COSMIC-CUBE-ALTERED *STEVE ROGERS*--HAVE *CORDONED OFF THE EARTH...*

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EARTH ORBIT.
OUTSIDE THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.

INCOMING.

COL. CAROL DANVERS.
CODENAME: "CAPTAIN MARVEL."

WATCH YOUR *COMM UNITS,* EVERYONE.

WE NEED TO *HEAR* EACH OTHER OUT HERE.

MONICA RAMBEAU.
CODENAME: "SPECTRUM."

GET READY-- HERE COME THE *CHITAURI--*

DR. ADAM BRASHEAR.
CODENAME: "BLUE MARVEL."

LET THEM COME.

WE'LL ALL DIE *TOGETHER!*

NOT *HELPFUL,* GAMORA.

WE JUST NEED TO HOLD OUT A LITTLE *LONGER--* LONG ENOUGH FOR *AMERICA* TO FINISH HER *MISSION.*

THEN THIS IS ALL OVER. *ALL* OF THIS.

COME ON, MAC.

BRACE FOR IT--

--NOW!

ALL HANDS--

--PROTECT THE STATION!

REMEMBER-- THEY'RE NOT *POKÉMON!* WE DON'T NEED TO GET THEM *ALL!*

DON'T DRAW THEIR FIRE UNLESS THEY'RE HEADING *RIGHT FOR--*

ADAM!

BEHIND YOU--!

AH.

THANKS, MONICA. I'M NOT SURE I COULD HAVE SURVIVED BEING *EATEN* BY ONE OF THOSE.

LIKE *QUASAR* WAS...

UGH.

DON'T DO THAT. DON'T TEAR THE WING OFF MY FIGHTER...

IT'S LIKE THEY'RE NOT EVEN LISTENING.

BRAND--

--YOU SHOULD HAVE *EJECTED FROM* THAT THING *FIVE SECONDS* AGO.

WE *CANNOT* LOSE ANYONE ELSE.

YEAH?

WELL, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE A *SHIP*, EITHER--

--ESPECIALLY IF THE *GUNS* STILL WORK.

ALL RIGHT. WE'RE NEARLY *DONE* HERE, EVERYONE.

THEY'RE PAST *US*--

--AND THEY'RE HEADING INTO THE *SHIELD!*

HORRIBLE.

I'VE TAKEN LIVES IN WAR *BEFORE.*

BUT THE *SCALE* OF THIS-- *MILLIONS,* RUSHING HEADLONG INTO *DEATH--*

THEY'RE NOT *SENTIENT,* ADAM.

THESE CHITAURI ARE *DRONE-CLASS--* THEY DON'T *HAVE* MINDS OF THEIR OWN. JUST THE INSTINCTS OF THEIR *QUEEN,* BEAMED ACROSS *GALAXIES.*

THEY CAN'T MAKE *DECISIONS* ANY MORE THAN A *RADIO* CAN *TALK BY ITSELF--*

I KNOW, CAROL.

AND I KNOW WE CAN'T *SAVE* THEM.

WE CAN BARELY SAVE OUR OWN *FROM* THEM.

BUT *STILL...*

...THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT EASIER TO *WATCH.*

NO.

NO, IT DOESN'T.

I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS *COMING.*

"I REMEMBER HOW IT STARTED.

"THREATS WERE COMING AT US FROM *ALL SIDES,* EVER SINCE I STARTED THE JOB.

"VISITS FROM *THANOS.* SHI'AR *POWER MOVES.* CELESTIAL DESTRUCTORS. THIS *ETERNITY* BUSINESS...

"...AND, OH YEAH, CHITAURI SWARMS WERE EATING ENTIRE *COLONY PLANETS*--

"--AND IT LOOKED LIKE THEY MIGHT BE HEADED *HERE.*

"WHEN *MARIA HILL* GAVE ME THE PLANS FOR THE *PLANETARY SHIELD,* IT WAS AN ANSWERED *PRAYER.*

"I PUT ALL MY CLOUT INTO THE PITCH. A REAL, WORKING *PLANETARY DEFENSE SYSTEM*-- A WALL AROUND THE *WORLD.*

CAPTAIN AMERICA-- *STEVE*--ACTUALLY WARNED ME *AGAINST* IT, YOU KNOW THAT? REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY. AND I *FELL* FOR IT.

"AND OF COURSE, WHEN THE CHITAURI *DID* HIT US, THE SHIELD JUST *HAPPENED* TO GO DOWN.

"WE TASKED ALL OUR *HEAVIEST HITTERS* TO REPEL THE WAVE. WHAT *ELSE* COULD WE DO?

"GOD.

"WE DID EXACTLY WHAT HE *WANTED.*

"AND THEN, THE SHIELD WAS '*REPAIRED.*' STEVE SWITCHED IT BACK *ON.*

"WE WERE SO DAMNED *HAPPY...*

"I SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT. SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT COMING.

"EVERY WALL HAS *TWO SIDES...*"

DAMN IT!

CAREFUL, CAROL.

YOU'RE MORE LIKELY TO BREAK YOUR *HAND* THAN BREAK THAT *SHIELD*...

I KNOW, I KNOW.

IT'S STOOD UP TO *EVERYTHING*-- OUR WEAPONS, MY *BINARY* FORM, EVEN THAT WEIRD *MERGED BEING* YOU AND ADAM TURNED INTO.

I CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE THING THAT *COULD* BREACH IT...

...EXCEPT MAYBE *GALACTUS.*

GOD, I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY THIS, BUT... WE *NEED* HIM NOW.

WE NEED THE *LIFEBRINGER.*

AMERICA WILL *FIND* HIM. WHEREVER HE'S *GONE*--WHEREVER HE *RETREATED* TO--SHE CAN *FOLLOW.*

IT'LL TAKE *TIME,* THAT'S ALL.

TIME?

HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE *LEFT?*

UGH. I **HATE** THIS.

HOW MUCH **LONGER?**

ROCKET...

HEY, I OWE CAROL FOR THE **THING** IN THAT **PLACE**, QUILL.

I AIN'T GOING **ANYWHERE**-- WELL, **PROBABLY** NOT.

NOT RIGHT **NOW.**

BUT THIS IS SO...SO **EARTH**, YOU KNOW?

YOU DUMB, SUICIDAL RIVER-APES ACTUALLY MANAGED TO **LOCK YOURSELVES OUT** OF **YOUR OWN PLANET.**

WHO EVEN **DOES** THAT?

FLARK, I **WISH** IT WAS A LOCK, I COULD AT LEAST MAYBE **CRACK** IT--

...

MAYBE IT *IS.*

AND MAYBE WE *CAN...*

IT'S AS EASY AS BREATHING.

AS EASY AS LETTING GO OF A HELD BREATH.

I LET GO OF MY *HUMAN* SHAPE, THE SHAPE OF MY *SELF...MY EGO...*

...AND I SPREAD OUT.

INTERPOLATE MYSELF INTO THE ENERGIES OF THE SHIELD. CAREFULLY, A PHOTON AT A TIME...

...TRYING TO MIMIC THEM.

MY MIND *DRIFTS*, EXPLORING THE FREQUENCIES.

IF I CAN FIND A COUNTERFREQUENCY, AN *INTERFERENCE PATTERN*, I CAN FIND A WAY *THROUGH*. MAYBE EVEN BLOW A *HOLE* IN THE DAMNED THING.

RADIO FREE MONICA.

BUT I CAN'T FIND IT WITH *HUMAN* SENSES.

I HAVE A FORM OF *COSMIC AWARENESS*--IT'S HOW I *SEE* AND *HEAR* WHEN I'M PURE LIGHT. I HAVE TO *USE* THAT NOW.

OPEN MYSELF UP...

...TO EVERYTHING.

THE MAGERY FLOODS IN TOO MUCH TO PROCESS AT ONCE. IS ALL THIS HAPPENING...?

CONCENTRATE. PROCESS.

REMEMBER WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR...

AMERICA?

IS THAT YOU?

AMERICA CHAVEZ.

WE'RE... FAR AWAY.

SOMEWHERE WARM-- COMFORTABLE. WE'RE SAFE HERE...

WHERE ARE WE?

OWEN REECE BUILT THIS PLACE.

NOW THE MOLECULE MAN HAS MOVED ON-- I KNOW NOT WHERE.

BUT THE SPACE REMAINS.

A PLACE I CAN REST. SOMEWHERE THE ENEMY CANNOT SEE...CANNOT REACH...

...UNLESS YOU LED HIM HERE.

ALREADY, I FEEL AN *AWARENESS.* WATCHING.

BUT NOT *MALEVOLENT...*

WHY DID YOU *COME* HERE, AMERICA CHAVEZ?

...

WE NEED *HELP.*

EARTH--THE *PRIME* EARTH-- IS IN *ENEMY HANDS.* THERE'S BEEN A FULL-ON *HYDRA TAKEOVER,* AND THE ULTIMATES ARE *LOCKED OUT.*

STEVE ROGERS PUT UP A *SHIELD* AROUND THE WHOLE *PLANET--*

YES. THE *SHIELD.*

I AM *AWARE* OF THE *SHIELD...*

HYPOTHETICALLY-- HOW SECURE IS THIS THING?

IT'S FULLY REACTIVE. COUNTERS ANYTHING YOU THROW AT IT. THAT CHITAURI ARMY YOU'RE SO WORRIED ABOUT?

BUGS ON A WINDSHIELD.

MARIA... I'VE SEEN SOME THINGS LATELY.

IF IT CAME TO IT... IF REALITY WAS ON THE LINE...

...COULD THIS THING STOP GALACTUS?

HEH. DID I STUTTER?

YOU HEARD ME, COLONEL.

ANYTHING.

I BEAR NO MALICE. BUT EARTH HAS CHOSEN ITS OWN FATE.

PERHAPS BEFORE LOGOS ATTACKED, I COULD HAVE BREACHED SUCH A SHIELD...AND SAVED YOU ALL FROM YOURSELVES...

...BUT NOT NOW. NOW...I MUST BUILD MY STRENGTH.

NOT WASTE IT.

...

I DON'T THINK I HEARD YOU RIGHT.

WASTE?

LOGOS' HOLD ON ME IS *BROKEN*--BUT HE *REMAINS* THE IRON LAW OF THE COSMOS.

THE *WAR* AGAINST HIM--AND THE DARK FORCES THAT *CORRUPTED* HIM--WILL REQUIRE *WARRIORS.* A FORCE OF ARMS *BEYOND IMAGINING.*

AND WHAT IS ONE *TINY PLANET'S* SOUL AGAINST THAT OF *ETERNITY?*

YOU *REALLY* NEED ME TO *TELL* YOU?

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW.

EVERYTHING'S PART OF THE BIG SHOW--OUR LITTLE PLANET, YOUR COSMIC WAR, *ALL* OF IT.

BUT *FINE.* YOU'RE ON THE *COUCH* FOR THIS ONE--I *GET* IT.

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.

WE'LL SAVE OUR *OWN* WORLD.

NOT LIKE ANYONE'S DOING IT *FOR* US.

I CAN'T MAINTAIN THE *CONNECTION*... SOMETHING...

SOMETHING'S *PULLING* AT ME...

CAROL?

MONICA--

COME ON, MONICA--TALK TO ME--

C-CAROL?

OH, THANK GOD. I THOUGHT WE'D LOST *YOU*, TOO.

HOW... HOW LONG...

SINCE YOU THREW YOURSELF INTO THE SHIELD LIKE A *LUNATIC?* NEARLY AN *HOUR.*

IF I HADN'T USED MY *ABSORPTION POWERS* TO SIFT *THROUGH* THE SHIELD AND PULL YOU *OUT...*

JUST DON'T PULL A STUNT LIKE THAT *AGAIN.*

OKAY? PRETTY PLEASE?

WE JUST NEED TO HOLD ON A LITTLE *LONGER,* MON.

JUST UNTIL *MAC* GETS BACK...

CAROL... I *SAW* HER. WHILE I WAS MERGED WITH THE SHIELD.

I USED MY *COSMIC SENSES,* AND...WELL, SHE *FOUND* GALACTUS. SHE'LL BE ON HER WAY BACK *NOW.*

BUT...

BUT *WHAT?*

HE'S *RECOVERED,* RIGHT? HE'S STILL *GOLD?* STILL ON OUR SIDE?

STILL THE *LIFEBRINGER?*

...YEAH. HE IS.

SO HE'S ON HIS *WAY?*

HE'S GOING TO HELP US BREAK DOWN THE *SHIELD?* BECAUSE, LET ME TELL YOU, WE COULD *USE* THE BIG GUY.

WE...WE COULD...

COLONEL DANVERS?

YEAH. YEAH, I SEE IT.

INCOMING.

OKAY. *STATIONS,* EVERYONE. WE'VE GOT *WORK* TO DO...

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS THE ULTIMATES² IN...

...AND NOBODY'S DOING IT *FOR* US.

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THE ULTI-MAILS

WRITE TO US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM (MARK "OKAY TO PRINT")

Greetings, Ulti-Mates! Al Ewing here, at the end of a long, long week, kicking back by answering your letters. Why not send us your mail at mheroes@marvel.com? Mark your letter OKAY TO PRINT and we'll print the best! And now, without further ado, let's dive into this month's Multiversal mailbag…

Hi,

Wanted to start by asking not to change Galactus to his old ways of destroying worlds again. This new Galactus is more interesting. If you have to have a Destroyer of Worlds, create a new character and have him or her take his place as the Destroyer of Worlds, leaving Galactus to be the opposite force of Life. Continue his new role as the Lifebringer. This new Galactus you guys have transformed was a genius twist of an idea.

The team members are cool. Love to see some new members join the Ultimates. How about Adam Warlock and Starfox as new members joining the Ultimates? They would be interesting characters to add more spice and twists to the storylines on this book.

Would love to see the Ultimates cross paths with the Eternals. First as enemies, then once it's clear why they clashed, then join forces as friends to battle the real menace. I would like to see the Eternals finally shine.

King Jason

Thanks, your majesty! Well, as you saw this ish, Galactus is back to his old gold self and resting up to kick some cosmic butt. As for your suggestions--Starfox was most recently in THANOS, and as for the Eternals…well, can I interest you in some Celestials? The Never Queen's still keeping one up her sleeve for later…

Dear ULTIMATES² creative team,

Any variation of the idea of dimensions outside the Multiverse is one of my favorite science fiction ideas. With that in mind, this has become one of my favorite Marvel comics. Also, the character interactions are great. I have two questions: 1. How did you come up with the reveal at the end of issue #5? And 2. What was that thing at the end of issue #5?

Thanks for creating an awesome series,
Ben Hansen

Thank you, Ben! The reveal at the end of issue #5 has been planned for a long time now--since shortly after I had the idea of having Eternity in chains in the first place. As for what that thing was, issue #6 gave you the full story of the First Firmament and his Dark Celestials--what did you think of it?

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I have just recently been re-reading James Robinson's ALL-NEW INVADERS series (which remains one of the best series in recent memory), and I have been reminded of an item called the God Whisper, a device which was introduced in that title.

To remind you, at the end of the first arc, Makkari of the Eternals threatened to use this item to control Galactus. Now, obviously a lot has changed with the new cosmos and the change to Galactus, but I was wondering if you had considered revisiting the God's Whisper as a device in one of your issues? (It's one of the few plot devices left unresolved from James Robinson's series.)

Also, given that this is the closest we currently have to an FF title (until the day the title is relaunched), I was wondering if there were any plans to revisit the Future Foundation? (If nothing else, I would like to see Alex Power return to the Marvel Universe and reunite with Power Pack.)

One final question: Dan Slott began to lay the seeds for something called the Eternity War many years ago. Is this something that we might see unfolding in ULTIMATES²?

Thanks for your time and apologies for the rambling nature of this e-mail!

James Hunter
Newbury, England

Hi James--there's a fair bit of inside baseball to this answer that I won't get into, but yes, we did think about the Gods' Whisper early on--very early on--in planning THE ULTIMATES². And if it's still out there…well, if this book's been about anything, it's been about how nothing stays buried forever. As for the Future Foundation--no plans yet, but never say never. Finally, Dan's Eternity War--I think he might have mentioned that to me at one point, but for me it's one of those things that started off as a line of throwaway dialogue and just grew. That said, I'll bet if I went back and read those old issues, I could no-prize it all pretty handily! Maybe I'll have a try…

Dear Ultimates,

I'm obsessed with this series! It's truly the only ongoing series that I'm reading, and I was thinking of how this team could possibly grow into something like the Avengers. I honestly would love to see new characters that aren't really active in the Marvel Universe show up here and help with all these big-time-hero problems, and I hope this series keeps going because there are so many approaches you can take with this type of team! Adding a character could certainly challenge the team leader America Chavez and help her grow as a leader. Keep up the amazing work!

Juan Diego Montano

Thanks, Juan! We're building up to something major in these pages, so now might be more a time to consolidate what we've got instead of bringing in new team members…or maybe it's time to bring in not one, not two, but FOUR powerhouse new teammates…for Galactus? Hmmm…and on that note, join us--and returning guest artist Aud Koch--next issue, as Galactus faces off against his oldest enemy: Ego, the Living Planet! The ending will shock you! The epilogue will stun you! Until then--be kind to yourselves, Ulti-Mates!

Al

ADDITIONAL READING:

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD KEEPING THE ULTIMATES TRAPPED IN SPACE, CHECK OUT *SECRET EMPIRE* #0 AND #1, ON SALE NOW! AND SEE CAPTAIN MARVEL RALLY THE TROOPS TO FIGHT OFF THE CHITAURI INVASION IN *MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL* #5, ON SALE NEXT WEEK!

NEXT:

ZONE